

REMARKS

Applicant has had an opportunity to review the outstanding Office Action issued by the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office in connection with this application, and now respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and/or reexamine the present application in view of the amendments and/or remarks contained in this paper.

Disposition of the Claims

Claims 7 and 21 had been previously canceled.

Claims 8 and 9 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Claim 25 has been allowed.

Claims 1-6, 13, 16-17, 19-20, 22-23 and 27-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by French (U.S. Patent No. 3,888,725).

Claims 1-5, 13, 15, 18 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Becker (U.S. Patent No. 6,182,957).

Claims 1-4, 6, 10, 13, 15-17, 19, 20, 22-23 and 27-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Von Hofe (U.S. Patent No. 2,492,908) in view of Becker (U.S. Patent No. 6,182,957).

Claims 11 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Von Hofe in view of Becker and further in view of Tiefel (U.S. Patent No. 5,885,406).

Claims 14 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Von Hofe in view of Becker and further in view of Wood (U.S. Patent No. 3,377,096) or Wilson, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,024,574).

Summary of the Amendments to the Claims

Claim 8 and 9 were previously indicated as containing allowable subject matter and hence have been placed in independent form.

Claims 1, 13, 15, 22 and 27-31 been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

The dependency of claims 2, 4, 6, 14, 17-20, 23 and 24 has been amended.

New claims 32-35 have been added.

Claims 2-6, 16, 19 and 20 have been amended to better correlate with the language of new claim 32.

Comments/Arguments

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the telephone interview conducted between the below signed representative of the Applicant and the Examiner on December 4, 2009. The substance of the interview is summarized herein. A proposed new claim 32 in draft form was presented to the Examiner for consideration. The current new claim 32 is essentially the same as then proposed. The proposed new claim was discussed along with the three primary referenced applied in the prior art rejections of the outstanding Office Action, namely, French, Von Hofe and Becker. No demonstration was conducted and no exhibit was presented. The Applicant's representative argued that the proposed new claim 32 distinguished patentably over the prior art of record inasmuch as no prior art reference of record either alone or in combination showed all the claimed elements of proposed new claim 32. After deliberation by the Examiner, it was ultimately agreed that the new claim 32 presented no new matter and overcame the prior art rejections. Indeed, it was agreed that new claim 32 was neither anticipated by nor obvious in view of the prior art currently of record.

Conclusion

For at least the reason(s) presented above, all the claims now remaining in the application are in condition for allowance, and accordingly, an early indication of the same is earnestly solicited.

Of course, if the Examiner feels that personal contact would facilitate expedited disposition of the present application, then he/she is hereby invited to contact the below signed representative of the Applicant.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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